

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing Of Claims:**

1.-9. (Canceled)

10. (New) A device for determining an instant a vehicle makes contact with an impact object, comprising:
  - an arrangement for determining the instant of contact by approximating a signal derived from an acceleration signal using a function.
11. (New) The device as recited in Claim 10, further comprising:
  - an arrangement for one of filtering the acceleration signal and integrating the acceleration signal once or twice.
12. (New) The device as recited in Claim 10, further comprising:
  - an arrangement for taking into account an impact velocity when determining the instant of contact.
13. (New) The device as recited in Claim 12, wherein the arrangement for taking into account the impact velocity determines the impact velocity as a function of a vehicle velocity.
14. (New) The device as recited in Claim 13, wherein the arrangement for taking into account the impact velocity determines the impact velocity as a function of a surrounding-field signal.
15. (New) The device as recited in Claim 10, further comprising:
  - an arrangement for approximating the signal using at least two threshold values.
16. (New) The device as recited in Claim 10, wherein the arrangement for determining uses a quadratic function.

17. (New) The device as recited in Claim 16, wherein the arrangement for determining determines the instant of contact from a vertex of the quadratic function.
18. (New) The device as recited in Claim 17, further comprising:  
an arrangement for taking into account an impact velocity linearly in the determination of the instant of contact.